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Budget Blues



From the President

*Everybody want to know why I sing the blues.
Everybody want to know why I sing the blues.
I've been around a long time;
I've really paid my dues.*

B.B. King

I don't know if I can stand to hear another cliché or metaphor currently used to describe budgets and their fall-out. "Belt-tightening" seems to be the most common one. Presumably, now that we have "trimmed the fat" from public service budgets, we now have to get some new notches in our belts or our pants will fall off. Ah, but these are "tough times" requiring "tough decisions." Usually this phrase indicates decisions that are toughest on people not making the decisions.

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Upcoming Events

Safe Harbour Workshop

April 17, 2013 (see page 11)

Extraordinary General Meeting

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UFV Employee Golf Tournament

May 11, 2013

Register at Human Resources

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UFV's 2012/13 budget is not yet approved. It's in process, having just passed through the Senate budget committee. It must still proceed through the full Senate and the UFV Board of Governors. I have registered my objections to the proposed budget in a letter to the Chief Financial Officer, and voiced the FSA's position that if cuts to positions must be made in order to balance the budget, then those cuts should go across the spectrum--that is, "excluded" managers should not be excluded from the pain of lay-offs. We plan to protest potential lay-offs among staff.

I was one of three FSA executive representatives designated to attend the only meeting of the Budget Advisory Committee two days before the Senate budget committee meeting. Having just received the document the evening before the meeting, I did my best to digest the information and come prepared to ask questions. My questions were graciously answered, though I was miffed that I had not had enough time to think all the implications through.

Budgets are complex, especially when they are for organizations whose expenditures exceed a hundred million dollars. I don't claim that I could put such a plan together, particularly in the face of this government's refusal to cover any inflation costs, to increase FTE allotments, or reward over-production of FTE's, or even to fund the raises they negotiated. For the most part, I had to admire the ingenuity of our Chief Financial Officer in "identifying efficiencies through realigning services and implementing new and/or streamlined business processes." In addition, the recent retirement incentive will result in a reduction of positions on a voluntary basis, and save money in the long term, though I suspect that the rest of us will keenly feel those reductions when their retiring colleagues are not replaced.

When all the dust has cleared and the rhetoric about "strategic priorities" is sifted, the fall-out of this proposed budget is still not rosy for our students, who are faced with the usual 2% tuition increase as well as an increase in the residence cost if they live on campus. It is also not rosy for our members. There are some proposed cuts—though not many—that will involve lay-offs within the staff, and the resultant agony of bumping. I cannot be more specific here, as the budget is not finalized and no formal notice of lay-offs has been given, though anyone likely to be affected has been contacted. There were originally faculty lay-offs slated as well, but these seem to have been ameliorated by retirements.

Rumours of lay-offs have been circulating, and the FSA executive are not deaf to your rumblings that the hiring of much-better-paid-than-we-are administrators has been quite brisk over the past five years. My letter to the administrators tasked with the budget is strongly worded (and after years of teaching literature, I can come up with some pretty strong wording), and I trust reflects the concerns of our members. I question the speed of the "advisory" process, and I challenge some of the conclusions. How is it that reductions in personnel fall within the staff and faculty and not within the administrative ranks? With the exception of one consolidation of Integrated Planning with Institutional Research, administrative positions and numbers are left intact. In my letter responding to the budget, I have offered some alternative suggestions to cuts within staff, specifically the freezing of the hiring of one or both of the two vacant administrative positions. If UFV were to postpone these administrative hirings for a year, it would certainly mean more work for some in administration, but there might well be a more generous—or at least reasonable—government in place by the time for the next budget. Meanwhile, the belt-tightening could be more evenly shared.

I have not yet received an answer to my letter, other than the reassurance that it would be forwarded to the Senior management committee, though to be fair, all this has happened only within the past three days (long Easter weekend, etc.). I hope that at least some of the decisions might be reconsidered.

Within the provincial context, lay-offs in our sector are quite limited. ESL in some institutions is suffering, and certainly the hardest-hit among faculty will be those who can often least afford it: the sessionals. In most colleges and universities, there will be fewer sections offered by non-regular faculty. Our course offerings may suffer, as may the pocketbooks of our non-regular colleagues.

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When either faculty or staff are laid off, with staff look anxiously over their shoulders anticipating bumping, then there is a high cost to the university in trust and morale among all employees. These costs must be weighed against potential "savings" for the university.

I will certainly be attending the Senate meeting on April 12 at 2:30 in A225 when the budget will come up for approval, and if the budget proposal remains unchanged, then I will ask for permission to speak. Martin Kelly, Staff Vice-president, has told me he'll be in attendance as well. Just remember, **Senate meetings are open.**

*If it ain't here, maybe in the year after
Instead of tears, I learn all about laughter.
Meanwhile, I'm stuck out here, Lord knows it just ain't fair.
But I know, yes I know, hey, I know
That there must be a better world somewhere.*

Dr. John

On a less high-pitched budget note, the FSA Executive have been reviewing our own budget proposal, and the larger questions of whether we make the best use of our resources. Fortunately, unlike UFV, we are not forbidden to carry over and use any operating surplus. By the time the AGM rolls around in early May, we hope to include a brief report on this topic, along with the customary budget and notes.

Given the budgets and other pressures, the work of the FSA Executive is complicated and occasionally frustrating, but it is important work, and rewarding to represent our members and uphold their rights and interests. Give some thought to running either for an office or for a Steward's position. I can assure you that those continuing in their terms on the executive are a treat to work with. It is the kind of service you can feel proud to have contributed.

This is our final *Words and Vision* for the year. My final report for the AGM will, I hope, be more reflective about the past year. But let me specifically recognize both Sylvie Murray, our Communications Chair, and Tanja Rourke, our FSA Admin Assistant, for transforming *Words and Vision* this year into an interactive document. This has not been an easy task. Thank you both.



From the

Editor and Communications Chair

Touching base ... and again in a few weeks

When I reminded the executive of the deadline for submission of their reports for this issue of the newsletter, I heard them gasp around the table. It seemed like an awkward time to be reporting while bargaining and budget are still very much works in progress, and officers can barely find time to breathe—much less to write reports. Nevertheless, we needed to touch base and it's a good thing we are—if only to remind you that the budget is not a done deal yet. As President Virginia Cooke explains in her report, the FSA executive has vigorously protested the proposed budget and is prepared to address the Senate when it considers it on Friday, April 12.

Bargaining is ongoing, but we are hoping that it will be concluded by the end of the month. We have booked the theatre in Abbotsford (B101) for meetings to review the results of bargaining on Monday April 29 (more specific information is being sent through email). These meetings will be carefully planned to allow those who wishes to speak a chance to do so (so be prepared to line up at a mic and present your comments/questions in 2-3 minutes; members of

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the bargaining team will be given some time to respond, but their time will be restricted too). As much as possible, we will post information on the private “bargaining updates” part of our website ahead of time, so you can come to the meeting prepared. If it’s absolutely impossible for bargaining to be concluded in time for this tight deadline, we will re-schedule the meeting. Either way, you will receive a reminder or a rescheduling notice by email, and the information will be posted on our website.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held the first week in May, in Chilliwack (CEP campus). As usual, proposed changes to the FSA Constitution will be sent ahead of time, along with the officers’ end-of-the-year reports. We are in the process of updating the job descriptions for the various executive positions that are opening this spring. They are:

2 year term:

President
Staff Vice-President
Faculty Contract Administrator
Secretary-Treasurer
Communications Chair
JPDC Co-Chair
Occupational Health & Safety Co-Chair
Social Committee Chair

1 year term:

FPSE Rep - Status of Women
FPSE Rep - Human Rights
FPSE Rep - Non-Regular Employees

Service on behalf of your fellow members is important work—consider running for a position.

There was one officer who didn’t look too fazed when the publication deadline was announced—Moira Kloster had been working on her third article on workload for quite some time. The two previous ones have been published in the September/October and November/December issues which can be found at www.ufv-fsa.ca/words-vision. Faculty members will find this last piece on scholarship of particular interest.

We’ll be in touch again soon ...



Vicki Grieve

From the

Chief Negotiator



RateMyUnionExecutive.com?

During our executive retreat in August of last year, we resolved to find better ways to communicate with our membership. We sincerely wanted to engage members—to take the workings of the FSA out of the dark offices we inhabit and to expose our decisions and practices to the light of day. We wanted input, critical response, and dialogue. This desire came from the current executive’s many years of rank-and-file membership in the FSA, and the individual head-scratching we’ve all done while contemplating particular articles in our collective agreement and asking “How did that get in there?” Most people who work here have a vague sense, I think, that changes to the agreement bubble up and spill onto the negotiation table through needs identified by either FSA members or UFV administrators, yet sometimes there seems to be little correlation between the obvious problem areas of our working lives and the remedies provided through our contract. The other thing I suspect we are all aware of is that the FSA executive, in or out of a bargaining cycle, has a great deal of control over what gets negotiated and how our contract is administrated. At the retreat in August (oh, those happy, innocent times!) we wanted to find a way to share the power.

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As an obvious step towards that goal, we decided to take advantage of the interactivity features of our new website platform. I still remember our fearless communications chair, Sylvie Murray, showing us a draft of the new website, which contained, among other things, a members' discussion area called the "e-café." Too casual, I said, maybe a bit too French, because I was visualizing beret-sporting, espresso-sipping members of the intelligentsia laughing and talking about nothing and smashing their empty coffee cups down. In retrospect, maybe Sylvie shouldn't have responded to that bit of feedback. We now have various discussion forums (as opposed to e-cafés), and there does not seem to be much laughing going on in there.

Not that there should be, necessarily. These are not easy times for the public post-secondary sector, and our institution is full of tensions and divisions, both blatant and subtle. Much of the response we have received in the discussion areas of the website reflect the strongly held views of some members on controversial subjects. (In dark moments I keep returning to William Blake, that profound and profoundly loony prophet who said "Without contraries there is no progression.") Those who actually post in the discussion areas only represent a tiny fraction of our total membership. I actually receive far more private emails in response to my bargaining reports than posts on the discussion forum. So of course, I'm asking, is the FSA Website the best tool we can create to generate feedback from our members?

Perhaps we need to try something else, as most people are shying away from the long-form response these days, especially on the web. Maybe we could check the pulse of the membership by having a thumbs-up button at the end of our FSA Bulletins, *Words and Visions* articles and website reports. You could either "like" us, or remain ambiguously silent. (It's interesting, isn't it, that there's no thumbs-down or thumbs-in-between button on Facebook?)

Maybe we should go one better, and mount a RateMyUnionExecutive.com site. We would, of course, devise a five-point rating scale in four categories, like that used by the *RateMyProfessors* site which our students employ to such great effect. However, to demonstrate the seriousness of this endeavor, we'd have to leave out the best part--the chili-pepper hotness designations. We could just import the *RateMyProfessors* categories: "easiness" (How easy is it to change our opinion on certain subjects? Are we too easy on our administrators?), "helpfulness" (Are we effective in helping you solve your individual problems?), "clarity" (Can we actually explain why we are doing the things we do?) and finally, "rater interest" (Are we able to make the business of managing labour-management relations here interesting and relevant to you?) This way, people who are really mad at us, or whom we've managed to please, will have a way to share their opinions. And if we really hate what we see there, we can go in and give ourselves some positive ratings, just like university teachers do. (Or so the critics of *RateMyProfessors.com* claim.)

Let me know what you think: hash-tag *#bad* ideas.

All kidding aside, we will soon be having our own democratic experience of the big thumbs-up and thumbs-down experience when it comes to ratifying our new agreement. The FSA bargaining team is working hard and fast to wrap up the negotiations. I'll provide more details in a bargaining report next week, and then later in the month there will be meetings and the opportunity for some real-time face-to-face discussion.



Extraordinary General Meeting

In anticipation of bargaining being completed by the end of the month, the Executive is calling an Extraordinary General Meeting to present and discuss the proposed contract. Further updates and information will be forthcoming before the meeting.

Monday, April 29, 2013
Room B101, Abbotsford Campus Theatre

11-11:45 am: Staff session
 11:45 – 12:00 pm: Break
 12-1:00 pm: EGM - Staff and Faculty
 1:00-1:30 pm: Break
 1:30 -2:30 pm: Faculty session

This schedule will allow members more concentrated time to ask questions and discuss issues of interest to their areas. Members who wish may, of course, attend both sessions as well as the EGM.



From the

Staff Vice-President

Cooperative? Gains?

Here is an interesting fact: Any raise we might get, any improvement in benefits or conditions will have to come out of what we are willing to give up. The government has put no (none, zero) money on the table to pay for anything. Worse than that. There is less money on the table this round. So as bargaining wades through 30 or 40 proposals, some highly complex, nearly all with some cost attached, the question becomes who has to give up what? For lots of reasons the whole thing inevitably leans towards being a null sum game. Someone's gain is another's loss. I don't think anyone planned it that way let alone thinks of it in those terms (I hope not!), yet that's what it looks like to me. To this point 'cooperative gains' seem to nearly all come out of what we, the FSA, are willing to give up or change and not UFV.

In the end when you vote on whatever the final product of bargaining is perhaps no one will be really happy about it. But vote you will, and one way or another we will move on. My main problem though, is who is going to feel like they've been thrown under the bus? If there are layoffs, certainly those people. Out of the lifeboat, sorry about the sharks. I have been told many times this is how it works and it can't be changed, and I kind of see that. Sort of. In a way. Very Darwinian. Yet I am having a very hard time accepting this as inevitable. We have a choice. We can try to keep everyone in the boat at the expense of our own comfort. We may fail, but we can try. Many will shake their heads and say this is fighting a hopeless battle against an implacable foe at impossible odds, and they may be right. The point is, it is still a choice, the only choice it is truly ours alone to make. In the climate we're currently in, it may be the only truly cooperative gain we can make.

By the way, FSA elections are coming. You will need a new Staff VP. Line up! Take a number! The learning curve is steep, and interested parties may want to have a chat beforehand.



From the

Faculty Vice-President

Timing

When we entered the new year I was confident that we would have our new contract in place by the end of March. Oh, how naive I was. There are many reasons that the anticipated completion date has passed us by—many proposed local changes to our current collective agreement, negotiations between the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC (FPSE) and the Post-Secondary Employers' Association (PSEA), financial constraints, and our meeting intensive institution, but what matters now is that we persevere to finish by the end of April, and we have a way to go to make that self-imposed deadline. We are working diligently on contract language for rank and tenure, though what the final language will be is uncertain as is the government's acceptance of it. Keep in mind that you will have an opportunity to signify your acceptance of the negotiated contract language for rank and tenure through a ratification vote specific to this part of the contract. Beyond rank and tenure, there are many unresolved issues such as what 'cooperative gains' really means and how we handle the many cost-items of our proposals. In these austere times, which cost items to support is a challenge. Please bear with us as we continue to navigate difficult discussions to improve our collective agreement.

In solidarity.



From the

Staff Contract Administrator

Winds of Change

I trust everyone loved the Easter long weekend. I felt blessed. By the weather, the four days off and having my bike back on the road.

A ride up Chilliwack Lake Road and smelling the river and trees along the way, for just a brief time, I felt all was right in the world...well...for a short time anyway.

As the FSA bargaining committee continues to do their best for all involved, it is hard to forget we are working within the stringent grips of the government's desired post-secondary budget.

As most know by now there is very little room for monetary gain in this round and, although the present budget has not been approved by Senate, lay-offs have been the 'hot-talk' around UFV.

Being prepared for change is better than not, and the FSA is. Considering there may be a few staff jobs on the 'chopping block', there is a very positive feel that most, if not all, will be placed within vacant positions, be reassigned to replace those who accepted a retirement incentive, perhaps cover someone on LTD, or simply be finessed into another department by people who care—which there are many, me included.

It may sound dire but we have to expect changes in today's economy. Over the last few months many staff have come to me questioning the ever-expanding employee population in departments with upper management, while their areas seem to take on more with less. Hopefully our employer understands that our staff body watches the balance of employees within the institution and knows the cost that comes with the positions throughout. I'm hoping that with potential lay-offs, the employer will cap the hiring at the top until the possibility of laying staff off subsides.

If by chance the lay-off demon rears its ugly head, remember I am here. I am here for those who may need to exercise their bumping rights and I will try to make it as painless and transparent as possible. Even if you have heard things that make you uneasy or fearful, please come see me. I know I can offer some words of comfort, perhaps even insight or information, to ease your troubled mind.

The wind and water will always be there. It is how we set our sail that ultimately decides where we will end up.



From the

Faculty Contract Administrator

Some Days the Dragon Wins

Wow, almost the end of the semester, almost the end of my FSA term as Faculty Contract Administrator, and after that amazing weather on the Easter long weekend, I hope that it's almost summer too.

Since my term with the FSA ends on May 31, I have been trying to reflect on what I have learned. I have learned:

1. That old saying about pleasing some of the people some of the time, and not being able to please all of the people all of the time, is quite correct!

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2. That I actually like my FSA BlackBerry – and will probably switch my personal phone to a BB when the one with the hard keyboard comes out. I am pleasantly surprised, and my children are completely shocked that I am now almost in the 21st century!
3. I guess this is something that I already knew, but this term with the FSA has certainly reinforced it – there are all kinds of people and personalities in the world. Some are easier to deal with than others, but everyone deserves the same level of respect and fairness.
4. It is not the job of the Contract Administrator (or any member of the union executive or steward) to save people from themselves. Some are hell bent on destroying themselves and don't care who they take down with them. You just have to let them go.
5. Some days you have to dig very deep for motivation to keep showing up to work.
6. Some days are amazing, and when something goes really right you just want to run up and down the halls screaming and celebrating, but you can't because of "confidentiality"!
7. Sometimes you just have to sit quietly while someone rants, cries, or yells at you because they need space and time and a listening ear to vent to – and that's OK.
8. Sometimes you will cry too.
9. Sometimes you just have to sit quietly while someone else gets (or takes) the credit for something that was your idea – and that is OK, because we are part of a collective, and anything that helps one person, or one group of people, ultimately helps us all.
10. Sometimes in life you are lucky enough to have an opportunity to work with a group of dedicated (I was going to say committed, but you know where they put people who are committed!), creative and hard-working people who really have the ability to put their individual agendas aside and work for the greater good of those that they represent.
11. Union members are under attack in our workplaces, communities, provincially, and federally. Some are under attack by the governments that fund them, while those same governments mismanage the taxes we pay. Yes, union members are also tax payers. We put the time and money into education to enable us to do our jobs, we work hard, we pay into our pensions and other benefits and we have bargained collective agreements that protect us. I am sick of hearing how much better we have it than the private sector. The latest attack was in the Tuesday April 2 Province newspaper editorial, begrudging us our bargained Easter Monday statutory holiday.
12. Everything is political – even things that shouldn't be!
13. Some days the dragon wins!



**No matter how hard you work,
No matter how right you are,
Sometimes the dragon wins.**



From the

FPSE Non-Regular Employees Rep

Denial Ain't Just a River in Egypt

Where does the time go? Wasn't it just December a few weeks ago? This year's winter term has flown by at a dizzying rate without so much as a moment to catch one's breath.

While the courses I've been teaching have certainly been rolling along, I suspect the rapidity of the past few months is mostly due to my involvement on the FSA Bargaining Committee and in negotiations with our employer. These affairs manage to absorb most of my free time each week; leaving me to wonder how it all ever gets done.

Of prime interest to us all is the question of how things are going at the bargaining table for Non-Regulars. Let me see if I can find a word to describe it: Dismal? Hopeless? Frustrating? Infuriating? Choose one of your own.

I've been repeatedly reminded that the glacial progress on Non-Regular issues is not due to a lack of insistence on my part. I'm told (depending on who is speaking) that I'm either a "strong, positive voice" for Non-Regs or that I am a "troublesome annoyance". Either way, I'm happy to hear that people are being made aware that Non-Regular issues are not to be ignored or taken in any way lightly in negotiations. Our bargaining team has raised several issues several times over the course of negotiations. However, our efforts to persuade the employer to make any significant progress on our behalf is fundamentally hindered by two "facts of life" here at UFV. Both seem either unstoppable forces or immovable objects.

The first "fact", so far as I can discern it, is an extreme reluctance on the part of the employer to do little more than acknowledge the existence of "Sessionals" on our campuses. We are here in great numbers, to be sure, but are presumably expected to be seen and not heard. Despite the fact that Non-Regulars teach a huge amount of the courses at UFV, and that we save this university millions in salaries and benefits, it seems we cannot expect to have these major contributions acknowledged even in the smallest ways (other than an occasional platitude or pat on the head). What ways might they be acknowledged? Salary increases? Access to basic benefits? Greater job security? Regularization? "Don't be ridiculous", they say. "Aren't you sessionals aware that we are operating under extreme fiscal restraints?" Hmm, I think to myself. Why weren't any of these recognitions of our contributions made during relatively better times then? It's remarkably clear that whether the economy is booming or busting you can always count one thing for certain – Non-Regulars will get left out. At some point in time, someone has to at least admit responsibility for the fact that Non-Regulars have been excluded from everything from remuneration to benefits to dignity itself. As someone once said, "Denial ain't just a river in Egypt."

But, of course, the employer could be forgiven for these sins. After all, it's their job to ensure that this university runs efficiently and within its budgetary responsibilities (however they might sort them out). It can hardly be their fault that Non-Regulars have been treated so shabbily. The very existence of over 300 Non-Regs is a key element in keeping costs low. Besides, they tell me, your Union hasn't made Non-Regular issues a priority. "It's not our job to promote the progress of Non-Regulars."

So what about our beloved "Union"? Has it been keen to champion the Non-Regular cause over the years? Hardly, my friends, hardly.

One need only read our current Collective Bargaining Agreement carefully to become aware that within its carefully-worded articles the exclusion of Non-Regulars has been consciously and deliberately drafted with maximum effect. We need only to remind ourselves who bargained this and previous versions of the document to understand that "me first" has been the paramount negotiating principle ("me" here meaning employer's budgets or full-time employees interests). For contemporary examples of this principle at play, I refer you to the recent threads on the FSA website

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regarding "Non-Regular Issues". The evidence is overwhelming sisters and brothers. You need merely seek it out in the pages of the CBA. I assure you, copious amounts are to be found at a glance.

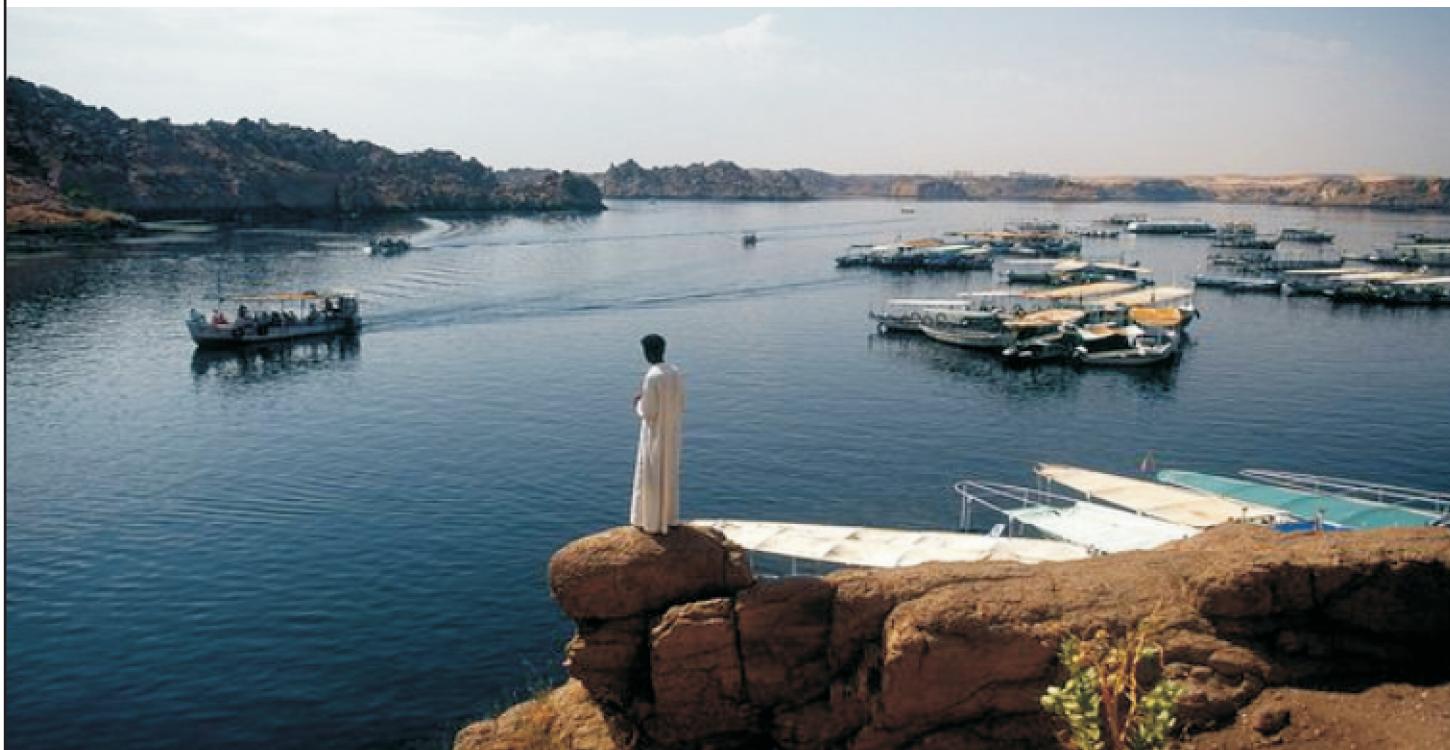
Now I know some of my friends and colleagues will squirm a little at my comments. They will remind me yet again of the "culture of collegiality" which has existed so long at our institution. They will insist that many full-time staff and faculty do very much care about the treatment of "sessionals" and they will deride me for being so terribly rude.

I too, prior to my tenure as your representative, believed very much that such "collegiality" existed. I had heard from many their support and kind words. But, my friends, life in the trenches is a different matter altogether. There, platitudes give way to fiscal reality and self-interest dominates good will. When the bullets are whizzing past your head, your allies and enemies become all too clear.

Perhaps, hopelessly optimistic, I believe it's still possible that some "Full-Time" cavalry might come riding into town and save the day. Having only just recently relinquished my belief in the Easter Bunny, I continue to cling to my other beliefs in miracles.

Failing a cavalry charge of epic and heroic proportions, fellow "sessionals", it falls to me to inform you that we stand alone on this battleground. The employer has already begun laying off part-time employees and "sessionals" are being thrown (once again) under the bus as we speak – your humble servant included. All acts (and more surely to come) in aid of lowering costs. We have no cause to lower our heads in defeat. Far from being over, the battle itself has yet to truly begin.

As reasonable and reflective thinkers as you all are, you have surely by now pondered the same questions that have been haunting me for some time: How long will a workforce of over 300 members – nearly half of the teaching faculty and a third of the entire union membership – allow itself to be trampled over as though it simply did not matter at all? How long will we continue to be considered a "resource" for administrative cost savings and increased salaries/benefits for full-time employees? How long will this group of extremely valuable instructors and colleagues remain a marginalized and exploited 'permanent underclass'? The answer to each question is all too obvious: When we have collectively had enough!





From the

Occupational Health & Safety Co-Chair

Violence in the Workplace...

How many of you are aware that there is a draft of an actual “Violence in the Workplace” policy, just awaiting approval? Chances are, very few. I can't really recall talking with anybody who even knew it was there. Yet there it is, under “Safety Programs” on the Occupational Health & Safety webpages.

I don't really know how long it has been there, and only came across it myself while checking the OH&S website for something else. There is a bright red note at the top indicating that comments are being solicited. How long we have to pass along our comments and observations before it becomes “approved” is unclear.

You can get to it through the Human Resources link in the left-hand menu bars on the UFV Home page. Or you can find it through the “UFV A-Z” link at the top of the UFV Home page, and look under “O” for Occupational Health & Safety. Then look under “Safety Programs” in the menu options down the left-hand side. Or you can click on the link below to go directly to the Violence in the Workplace page: http://www.ufv.ca/ohs/safety_programs/violence-in-the-workplace/.

Please have a look at it, and preferably a close read. Consider whether or not it covers situations that might affect you. Think about how it could be improved before it becomes an official policy. Talk about it with your colleagues and encourage them to read it and think about it and comment on it as well.

Please also be sure to read the little blurb on the page describing the Violence in the Workplace program, in addition to the draft policy, because there is some wording and information in there that I didn't really notice in the policy itself (although it may be in there somewhere).

My report in the last issue of *Words & Vision* referred to “lines of communication” but it appears some of the lines aren't working very well. Violence in our workplace is, unfortunately, becoming more of an issue than it used to be even a few years ago. And I am happy to see a policy (and specific procedures) being developed to address it. But it doesn't help very much if people don't know about it and still don't know what to do in certain situations. I'm not even sure that “the powers that be” all know how things are intended to work. Maybe we all just need to talk with each other more.

I've really enjoyed the opportunity to be involved over the past four years as OH&S Co-Chair and as a member of the FSA Executive, and I have learned ever so much about the legislation and different aspects of health and safety issues. However, it's now time for me to step aside and let someone else take over who can bring fresh eyes and new ideas and who can really take charge of helping to develop a more vibrant, more visible, and really effective Occupational Health & Safety Committee. I'm happy to share whatever I've learned and what I've collected over these years, but here's putting out the call for a take-charge kind of person to, well..., take charge. It's a great opportunity for somebody to really move forward with this part of our fast-growing workplace. Who's up for the challenge?



We are planning a Safe Harbour workshop at UFV on April 17, 2013, from 10 am to 12 pm.

The Safe Harbour program aims to “celebrate our differences, helping to create safer, more welcoming communities that support diversity and reject discrimination. Safe Harbour is a commitment to diversity that helps increase the resilience of organizations by increasing their community profile as diversity leaders”.

All FSA members are invited to attend. If you are interested in attending, please email melissa.walter@ufv.ca by April 12.



From the

FPSE Status of Women Rep

Bif Rocks UFV for International Women's Day and the FPSE Status of Women meeting in Vancouver

Lisa Morry

I will keep this brief as the year-end reporting period approaches. Our International Women's Day event, featuring Bif Naked, was highly successful. A full house listened as Bif Naked shared a message about her journey through punk rock and cancer and dealing with the challenges of a changing body, including recording music during her illness, with her headphones sliding off her bald head. UFV liked her so much we're giving her an honorary doctorate as University President Mark Evered announced at the conclusion of our March 8 event. I won't take the space here to individually thank everyone who helped because they have already been mentioned, but I would like to highlight the welcome to Sto:lo territory from Dr. Wenona Victor and the Sto:lo Women's Empowerment Society. I believe I missed them in the initial round of thanks.

In February I attended the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators' Status of Women meeting at the Hyatt in Vancouver. The women's committee voted to recommend that Presidents' Council ask the next provincial government to bring back the Ministry of Women's Equality, along with funding for women's initiatives. At a joint breakfast session, Cindy Oliver, FPSE president, urged us to encourage our students to vote. Students are particularly affected by the upcoming provincial election because the provincial budget for post-secondary education is going down, she said. Operating grants per student have declined 20 per cent since 2001, while tuition fees are going up. That's reason enough for all of us to take an interest. Please vote.



Scholarship at UFV: what's “enough”?

By Moira Kloster, Philosophy Department

Back in August, a colleague asked me how you could tell if you were doing “enough” scholarship. Was a paper every year too much? Was nothing for six years too little? My short answer was, “Don’t worry; do what feels right to you”. My colleague was not happy with that.

Eight months later, I have a better answer. I thought I’d share it because I know my colleague isn’t the only one worrying. It’s very hard to say what’s “enough” scholarship when all you have to go on is what some people here seem to be doing, or what friends might have experienced at a research university.

My answer looks at what actually happens at UFV. I haven’t seen results like this compiled anywhere, and I think the results should reassure everyone, from the people who don’t think that anything they are doing even counts as “scholarship” to those who know they could and would do more if they had the time.

First, some numbers. We have 325 full-time B faculty. There are 68 people on the list of applications for research or scholarly releases this year. They aren’t the only people doing research or scholarship, of course. However, all of them are clearly doing the maximum amount UFV will pay for. There are 18 people on sabbatical with research or scholarly projects. Another 17 people on the Human Research Ethic Board (HREB) tracking list have not applied for releases but do have research projects involving human subjects. That’s 103 people. The total would be higher if we knew who is working without a release on projects that do not involve human subjects. It would also be higher if we include the handful of people who are funded by external sources. However, let’s assume this estimate is a reasonable ball-park figure to work with. That gives us, at a minimum, 30% (103/325) of the faculty doing at least one substantial project in a given year.

Interestingly, this 30% figure is spread almost evenly across the institution. There aren’t “scholarly” and “non-scholarly” departments. Most departments have about 1/3 of their members on the Scholarly Activity/ Research Option or HREB lists in a given year. That’s 1-3 people for smaller departments of 7-10. There are four exceptions, and I could have predicted three of them just from knowing how often the same individuals turn up on the list of release applications. They are Geography, Criminology, and English, with 50%, and the outlier, KPE, with 60%. (JPDC experience shows KPE has set a departmental expectation for research activity that exceeds institutional or divisional norms. Nursing, in the same division as KPE, has one of the lowest rates of release— about 10%—because their schedules make it much harder than average to fit in scholarship except when they’re on sabbatical.)

So the first point about scholarship would be: don’t compare yourself to performance in the 50% departments—even if you are in one of those departments. It is, by and large, the same names on the release applications every year. In any department, some people are active most years and other people aren’t.

Should we be encouraging scholarship by getting more people to use the available releases? If you do want to do more than you are doing, think about maybe applying for a release every third year and encouraging other department members to do the same: that would be equivalent to funding 1/3 of the department each year.

We could assume we’re ok as we are: we should just leave the releases to the most active people, and relax. But is this possible, when all of us have “scholarship” required as part of our jobs (as in the current [Article 18](#))?

I have a devious but well-informed answer for this. The reason you can relax is because even if you think you aren’t

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doing any “scholarship” at all, the chances are that you are doing enough to satisfy job expectations. Here's why. You'll have a sabbatical coming up in one to seven years. Even if you are not active beforehand, by the time you are back from sabbatical, you'll have done an amount of scholarship that would be an acceptable minimum for anyone. There are three reasons why.

First, some people cannot do any work in their interest area unless they have a chunk of time off with the freedom to go somewhere else and work with others, so the sabbatical is their only realistic time to get something done.

Second, eight months out of a sixty-four month teaching schedule (2 duty semesters per year out of eight years) is 1/8 (12.5%) of your work. One model of workload we've had as a baseline for at least the last decade of discussions has been the “80-10-10”—teaching-focused at 80%, with 10% scholarship and 10% service. With the sabbatical, you meet the 80-10-10 model with room to spare!

Third, you are not “doing nothing” in years 1-7. In order to be ready to write the proposal for your sabbatical, you have to have an interest area and have done enough thinking about it to see why it would help you grow as a professional. You have to have stayed alert for things that interest you, reflected on what you want to do and why, and collected material, or contacts, or ideas that you could work on when you got the time. So you are doing ongoing scholarship during the remaining 7 years, but it is just simmering in the background while you focus on the rest of your job.

The vast majority of faculty do this much: in any given year, of 25-30 people going on sabbatical, only maybe 3-4 (10-15%) don't know ahead of time what they'd like to do, and even they've found a solution after JPDC works with them.

Now we have a picture with some proportion to it. In a given year, about 70 people are doing an above-average amount of scholarship by taking one of the available releases or using external funding to do scholarship in place of some teaching. Another 20 people are doing something scholarly in addition to their regular teaching load—from the HREB list of current projects with human subjects. Suppose there are as many again with active projects not involving human subjects. (A search through other records produced about 30 people not on the current release lists but known to have projects). That leaves about 220 people who might only be doing the 10% minimum. The ratio, then, is 30% maximally active to about 10-20% in-between to 50-60% probably minimally active.

A key point about this current distribution of scholarship is that it is sustainable. We are at the funding limit for releases—none go unused. We could distribute the available releases by rotating them through more people with each getting a release less often, but without additional resources we cannot give more people more release from teaching. What does this look like for the people who are struggling to stay active without a release?

I asked an eclectic selection of people I knew are active scholars, some of whom often get releases, some of whom occasionally get releases, and some of whom seldom or never ask for releases. I asked what they did, and how much, with and without a release. The answers ranged all the way from a low of “nothing at all without a release” up to “possibly 12 projects on the go”. They agree teaching soaks up time and energy so there is little left for anything else. The average in a full teaching year seemed to be 1-2 projects on the go at any one time, and if there's no release available, personal projects will take a back seat to research involving students. And getting anything done depends on whether you have young children at home or major service commitments on or off campus....

So my longer, better answer to the question of how much scholarship you should be doing by comparison to others at UFV remains the same as it was eight months ago: “Don't worry.” The only way you could be doing too little to honour your job requirements would be if you had no idea what could possibly enrich you and count as scholarship for your sabbatical, but JPDC can fix that when the time comes.

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What's Next on the FPSE Calendar?

For updates and upcoming meetings at the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators, visit their new website at <http://www.fpse.ca>

**2013 FPSE
Annual General Meeting**

May 15-17 / Nanaimo

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For more information, visit:
http://www.fpse.ca/mbr_resources/wevote2013

words & vision

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